
Editorial Comments

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New book by Don Knuth

One fine March day, I arrived at my desk to find a package from Stanford's Center for the Study of Language and Information (CSLI). Unwrapping it eagerly, I found a copy of *Digital Typography*, inscribed to me by Don. This collection brings together most of Don's short writings on typography. The only \TeX -related paper that I miss is "The Errors of \TeX ", but that has already appeared in a collection, *Literate Programming*, also published (in 1992) by CSLI; however, there's a chapter "The Final Errors of \TeX ", which analyzes the types of bugs found and fixed since 1988, and also summarizes some unfortunate "features" and several design flaws that he would have changed had he "thought of them early enough before deciding to finalize the design."

Much of the content of *Digital Typography* has appeared in *TUGboat* over the years; of 34 articles, 19 appeared first in *TUGboat*, and one more, which first appeared in the NTG MAPS, was also published here. Going through the pages has given me a superb overview of the history of \TeX and also of my experiences as editor of *TUGboat*.

A review or two should be available for the next issue. The book is introduced on Don's Web pages, along with a list of its glitches; don't bother to report the absence of running heads on pages 361, 363 and 365—I've already claimed that, and received my to-be-framed-rather-than-cashed check for \$2.56 along with the explanation of how it happened. (For the curious, the article, "AMS Euler—A New Typeface for Mathematics", was full of special active characters, enclosed in `\begingroup \catcode ... \endgroup` and the chapter began inside of the group. "The CSLI format set `\chaptertitle` for running heads, and `\chaptertitle` became vacuous when the group ended.")

While you're waiting for the next issue and the reviews, check it out at the bookstore or the library if you get a chance. The ISBN is 1-57586-011-2.

ε - \TeX news

Peter Breitenlohner announced the release of a new version (2.1) of ε - \TeX . This release fixes a bug in the handling of marks for implementations where `null=min_halfword` is not zero.

ε - \TeX work will no longer be carried out within the $\mathcal{N}\mathcal{T}\mathcal{S}$ working group, but will proceed on its

own under Peter Breitenlohner's direction; the rest of the ε - \TeX team will continue this work as well.

We will try to obtain reports from both the ε - \TeX and $\mathcal{N}\mathcal{T}\mathcal{S}$ groups for the next issue.

Patent for style sheets in electronic publishing for Microsoft

On 12 January 1999, patent number US5860073 was issued to Microsoft Corporation for "Style sheets for publishing system". The abstract reads as follows:

The use of style sheets in an electronic publishing system is described. A style sheet is a collection of formatting information, such as font and tabs in a textual document. The style sheets described herein are applied to individual display regions (controls) on a page. Unlike previous systems, the display regions in this system do not contain any text at the time the style sheet is applied. Rather, the text, or other media such as graphics, is poured into the display region when the title is rendered on the customer's computer.¹

While the references attached to this citation pertain specifically to "cascading style sheets", the title and abstract indicate no such limited scope. Let's hope that the unadorned term "style sheets" doesn't get trademarked like "Kleenex", so that we can continue to use it in other appropriate contexts.

New \LaTeX Project Public License

In preparation for \TeX Live 4, which is shipped with this issue, an extraordinary effort was made to regularize the licensing terms under which various packages on the CD are distributed. One of the results of this effort is the restatement of the license for the base \LaTeX distribution, in a separate document, the \LaTeX Project Public License (LPPL), which can be cited by other software, even if it is unrelated to \TeX .

The LPPL can be found at <ftp://ftp.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/latex/base/lppl.txt> and equivalent areas at other CTAN sites.

In brief, the license requires that a licensed item carry a copyright notice that cites the LPPL and be accompanied by a list of files covered by the license. It provides for free use of the item as long as

- all files are included in any (re)distribution;
- any file which is to be changed must be renamed before changes are made;
- any modified items are clearly identified, and the address to which error reports are to be sent is changed;

¹ http://www.patents.ibm.com/patlist?icnt=US&patent_number=5860073

- the unmodified version of the file, or sufficient equivalent information, is distributed so that the user of the modified version can obtain an original, unmodified version.

All restrictions are intended to target the goals of reliability, portability, and predictability.

Once the LPPL text had been packaged in a separate, easily identified file, the **T_EX Live** team encouraged all contributors of packages to the CD to subscribe to it. While the CD does contain some items with other licenses (e.g. some shareware implementations of T_EX, included for convenience), nearly all fonts and macro packages and collections now cite the LPPL.

Packages which formerly were released with various restrictions but have now been issued under the LPPL include the Bakoma fonts.

New goodies on CTAN

A number of interesting things have been uploaded to CTAN over the past few months. Here are a few that I found especially intriguing.

- The CMCYR fonts in Type 1 format. These are Russian extensions for the Computer Modern fonts. Both METAFONT sources and the Type 1 files are included. From Basil Malyshev. Found in `fonts/cyrillic/cmcyr`.
- Support for typesetting of Cree/Inuktitut in Canadian Aboriginal Syllabics. Includes METAFONT source, a L^AT_EX style package, and a user's manual in L^AT_EX source and PostScript. From Ivan Derzhanski. Found in `language/casyl`.
- The ConT_EXt system, by Hans Hagen. (See the articles by Hans in *TUGboat* 19(3) for a few features of ConT_EXt.) Found in `macros/context/` and subdirectories. The documentation is still available only via the Web at <http://www.ntg.nl/context/>.
- The TeXemplar.cls class for the new journal of CervanT_EX, the Spanish T_EX User's Group, which has just been formally registered. From Javier Bezos. Found in `macros/latex/contrib/other/TeXemplar`.

In this issue, a few small L^AT_EX utility packages, some of which have also recently appeared on CTAN, are explored in *The Treasure Chest*.

Welcome to CervanT_EX

As mentioned above, there is a newly established language-based group—CervanT_EX, also known as GUTH, the Grupo de Usuarios de T_EX Hispanohablantes, for Spanish-speaking T_EX users.

According to their home page, <http://gordo.us.es/Actividades/CervanTeX/CervanTeX.html>, they are planning their first meeting, in Madrid, 13–14 September 1999. Many other interesting items are mentioned, in particular a large body of documentation in Spanish.

We wish them well.

Electronic TUGboat

For a long time, our intention has been to make *TUGboat* available in electronic form, perhaps with some months' delay. That this hasn't happened yet, that the delay sometimes seems to be permanent, is largely a consequence of lack of time and resources. Remember, please, that everyone responsible for putting together *TUGboat* is a volunteer—we all have “other” jobs, some of us have families, and we do like to eat and sleep occasionally.

Another small difficulty is that we have never received permission from authors to distribute their words in any form but print; we assume that submission of an item carries with it permission for it to appear in *TUGboat*, but for anything else, we must ask—and once again, we haven't had time to do that, but we're starting.

For the foreseeable future, we will have to limit what is posted to PDF files; these can be generated nearly automatically from the PostScript files used to generate an issue, so this is the most efficient method available to the production staff. We realize that this may not be convenient for some people; however, the Acrobat reader *is* available for most current platforms, and supporting other formats is simply too time-consuming to make it practicable at this time.

We are making an effort to ask for the necessary permissions, and PDF files are now created for each article as it is completed. Some articles *have* already been posted on the TUG Web pages—they are linked from the tables of contents, which *are* complete.

We invite you to look at the *TUGboat* Web pages and send us your comments. Start at <http://www.tug.org> and follow the *TUGboat* links. If there are particular articles you would like to see appear with some priority, let us know; we will try to work first on items that we know are in demand.

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